

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION EA-12

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S E C R E T BANGKOK 1548

EO 11652: XGDS
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SUBJECT: THAI NARCOTICS POLICY

1. MS. FALCO EXPRESSED HER PLEASURE AT BEING ABLE TO TALK TO PRIME MINISTER KRIANGSAK ABOUT NARCOTICS, A PROBLEM OF GREAT CONCERN TO PRESIDENT CARTER. SHE SAID THE UNITED STATES IS PLEASED BY THE PROGRESS IN THAILAND TO DATE AND HOPES FOR CONTINUING COOPERATION SO THAT THERE CAN IN TIME BE A RESOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM. OUR BILATERAL COOPERATION WITH THAILAND IN CROP SUBSTITUTION, REHABILITATION AND ENFORCEMENT HAS BEEN VERY GOOD, AS SHE AND THE PRIME MINISTER HAD DISCUSSED THE PREVIOUS EVENING AT DINNER.

2. ON CROP SUBSTITUTION, MS FALCO SAID WE ARE PLEASED AT THE PROGRESS MADE OVER THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS WITH THE EXPERIMENTAL PROGRAM. THE WORLD IS LOOKING TO LEARN FROM THE EXPERIENCE IN NORTHWEST THAILAND. AS THE RURAL DEVELOPMENT/ CROP SUBSTITUTION PROGRAM BECOMES CONCRETE MORE ASSISTANCE WILL BECOME AVAILABLE FROM S/NM FUNDS WHICH ARE LIMITED IN AMOUNT BUT READILY AVAILABLE, FROM AID, AND FROM THE UN AND OTHER GOVERNMENTS. THE UNITED STATES WILL ENCOURAGE THE LATTER TO ASSIST.

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3. KRIANGSAK SAID HE HAD BEEN PURSUING THE CROP SUBSTITUTION PROGRAM FOR YEARS AND IS PLEASED THAT THE UNITED STATES HAS RECOGNIZED ITS IMPORTANCE. HE HAS REORGANIZED ALL OF THE PROGRAMS IN THE NORTHWEST UNDER A COMMITTEE HEADED BY THE RECTOR OF CHIANG MAI UNIVERSITY IN ORDER TO OBTAIN BETTER, FASTER RESULTS. THERE IS AN URGENT NEED TO CONVINCE THE FARMERS THAT THEY CAN EARN MORE FROM

OTHER CROPS THAN OPIUM.

4. ON SUPPRESSION/ENFORCEMENT, KRIANGSAK SAID HE IS LOOKING FOR A BETTER ORGANIZATIONAL ARRANGEMENT. CAN THE US ADVISE HIM ON THIS? HE IS CONSIDERING IMPROVING THE BPP CAPABILITIES BY ORGANIZING AT LEAST FOUR SPECIAL STRIKE PLATOONS. HE IS ALSO GOING TO BAN CHEMICALS USED FOR OPIUM REFINING IN THE AREA ABOVE A LINE TO BE FIXED SOMEWHERE IN NORTHERN THAILAND. HE INTENDS TO COOPERATE MORE CLOSELY WITH BURMA SINCE THE REFINERIES ARE ON THE BURMESE SIDE. THE THAI CAN NOT GO INTO BURMESE TERRITORY, BUT BURMA DOES NOT HAVE ENOUGH MILITARY FORCE TO COPE WITH BOTH THE TRAFFICKERS AND ALL OF THE INSURGENT GROUPS.

5. MS FALCO AND MR OAKLEY EXPRESSED GRATIFICATION AT THE INTEND TO WORK MORE CLOSELY WITH BURMA, AND STRESSED HOW IMPORTANT THIS IS. THEY ALSO STRESSED THE NEED TO REMOVE GROUPS LIKE THE SHAN UNITED ARMY FROM NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING. THIS WOULD NOT BE EASY BUT MUST BE DONE.

6. OAKLEY POINTED OUT RECENT REPORTS OF THE FLOW OF NARCOTICS OUT OF THAILAND THROUGH THE ANDAMAN SEA AND OVERLAND TO MALAYSIA. THERE MAY BE A PATTERN OF COOPERATION BETWEEN TRAFFICKERS AND INSURGENTS ALONG THE THAI-MALAYSIAN BORDER SIMILAR TO THAT WHICH EXISTS ON
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THE THAI-BURMESE BORDER. INSURGENTS CAN PROVIDE PROTECTION FOR TRAFFICKERS AND THE LATTER CAN PROVIDE MONEY TO THE FORMER.

7. KRIANGSAK SAID HE HAS IDENTIFIED THE MAJOR INDIVIDUAL DEALERS IN NARCOTICS, SOME OF WHOM ARE IN BURMA, AND IS DEVELOPING EVIDENCE SO THEY CAN BE ARRESTED AND CONVICTED. HE IS PUSHING THROUGH A LAW PROVIDING FOR HEAVY PENALTIES OF TRAFFICKERS, AS SINGAPORE HAS DONE.
WHITEHOUSE

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